

## **MEMORANDUM REGARDING DISCRIMINATORY CONDUCT**

March 4, 2019

All clubs, teams, coaches, managers, players, and parents should be reminded that discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated at ASSA events. This is a ZERO tolerance position. As such, I am reminding all participating teams and clubs of this position so there can be no doubt whatsoever as where ASSA stands with respect to this type of behavior. Coaches should remind their players and parents of the below laws, rules, and codes so there is no surprise when a violation results in ejection from a game and the potential for longer suspensions. In short, discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. All Arkansas referees will also be reminded of the below regulations and advised that if a violation occurs, the player should be sent off the pitch, whereupon further consequences may be levied by the club, league and/or ASSA. Referees and Assistant Referees will be on the watch for this behavior, as it has no part in our game, so all coaches should ensure their players are aware and expressly advised that such behavior will receive harsh consequences.

FIFA's Laws of the Game, Law 12, expressly states "A player, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offences is sent off: . . . .

- biting or spitting at someone . . .
- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures . . ."

Further, ASSA's own rules address this behavior. Section 4.24.1 notes "Any person (player, parent, coach, referee, board member, volunteer, or any other individual) . . . is expected to conduct themselves appropriately and abide by the Code of Conduct." Section 4.24.2 expressly delineates behavior that will not be tolerated:

- Assault
- Harassment
- Racial or religious violence
- Inappropriate language and/or actions
- Harassment of other club officials, referees, coaches and/or players

Additionally, ASSA's rules specifically state the following:

- ASSA members will be an example of good sportsmanship to all players, coaches, and parents and address all players in a positive, encouraging manner (Section 4.24.3)
- ASSA members will respect and support all coaches, players, and officials through words and actions (Section 4.24.4)

- ASSA members will view opponents as necessary friends that provide players the opportunity to participate (Section 4.24.5)

ASSA's Code of Conduct echoes these sentiments by noting that all individuals will "refrain from participating in or encouraging any of the following:

- Assault (Verbal or Physical)
- Harassment (Sexual, Racial, or Religious)
- Taunting
- Use of inappropriate language . . ."

The Code of Conduct further provides that all individuals "Be an example of good sportsmanship to all players, coaches and parents, and address all players in a positive, encouraging manner." All individuals will "respect and support all coaches, players and game officials through words and actions." All individuals will "view opponents as necessary to provide players the opportunity to participate."

As per the Code of Conduct, clubs will be notified of a first offense and instructed to address the issue with the individual. The club is required to provide ASSA with details regarding the action taken and what other states the club is taking to curb the behavior institutionally. If a second offense occurs, the offending individual will be suspended immediately and subject to hearing before the Appeals and Discipline Committee.

Reinstatement to ASSA is not guaranteed.